

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 IO-14 OMB-01 ACDA-19 DPW-01 DRC-01 /150 W
----- 068495

R 280939Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4643

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CONFIDENTIAL BANGKOK 10619

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TH, VN

SUBJECT: THAI-NORTH VIETNAMESE RELATIONS

REF: A. BANGKOK 8900; B. BANGKOK 9575

1. THE SAME KEY MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OFFICIAL WITH WHOM WE DISCUSSED THAI-DRV RELATIONS ON MAY 31 (REF A) TOLD US JUNE 27 THAT THE RTG HAD MADE NO PROGRESS IN TRYING TO OPEN A DIALOGUE WITH HANOI. HE REITERATED HIS THEORY THAT A POSSIBLE SOLUTION WOULD BE TO GO AROUND THE CURRENT POLEMICAL BARRIERS THAT SEPARATE THE TWO COUNTRIES, AND USE A FRESH APPROACH SUCH AS AN OFFER OF ECONOMIC AID.

2. WE ASKED ABOUT A JUNE 26 HEADLINE ARTICLE IN "THE NATION" WHICH CLAIMED THAT THE NEW THAI AMBASSADOR TO LAOS WOULD BE APPROACHING THE LAO FOREIGN MINISTER ABOUT RELEASING "THE ESTIMATED 640 THAI PRISONERS OF WAR IN LAOS." THE OFFICIAL DESCRIBED THIS REPORT AS PRESS IMITATION OF WESTERN CONCERN OVER PRISONERS OF WAR. HE SAID THAT AMERICANS VALUED INDIVIDUAL LIFE MUCH MORE HIGHLY

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THAN ASIANS, AND ACKNOWLEDGED THAT PRISONERS OF WAR WERE

A PRIME DOMESTIC POLITICAL ISSUE IN THE U.S. HE IMPLIED
THAT THE THAI AMBASSADOR IN VIENTIANE DID NOT HAVE THIS
ITEM AT THE TOP OF HIS AGENDA.

3. HE FURTHER CONTENDED THAT HANOI REALIZED THE EMOTIONAL
IMPLICATIONS OF THIS ISSUE FOR AMERICANS AND PLAYED IT UP
IN THE PARIS NEGOTIATIONS. PARTICULARLY GIVEN THE NORTH
VIETNAMESE ATTITUDE TOWARD THEIR OWN POW'S IN LAOS, HE
DID NOT SUSPECT THAT NORTH VIETNAM WOULD PLAY THAI
PRISONERS AS A NEGOTIATION ISSUE WITH THAILAND, SHOULD
THE TWO COUNTRIES EVER GET TOGETHER FOR TAKS. THE NORTH
VIETNAMESE WOULD REALIZE THAT FELLOW ASIANS SIMPLY WOULD
NOT BE RESPONSIVE TO IT.

KINTNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, FOREIGN RELATIONS, NEGOTIATIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION, MILITARY AGREEMENTS, POW RETURN
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 JUN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: BoyleJA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BANGKO10619
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740171-1102
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974066/aaaaaeid.tel
Line Count: 75
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. BANGKOK 8900; B. BANGKOK 9575
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: BoyleJA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 APR 2002 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <24 MAR 2003 by BoyleJA>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THAI-NORTH VIETNAMESE RELATIONS
TAGS: PFOR, TH, VN
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005